

Hereford Yoga CIC

EQUITY POLICY

HYCIC positively embraces the value and benefit of diversity and inclusion, in line with the core values of the company and the wider philosophical base of Iyengar yoga. Our aim is to celebrate our diverse community, and promote and foster positive relationships between every person that is in contact with the organisation.

Following suit of Iyengar Yoga UK, we believe that it is more appropriate to update the name of this policy to Equity rather than Equality, as they explain that "Equality is about treating members fairly and impartially without bias and to create conditions that foster fairness, encourage kindness, and value diversity and promote dignity and inclusion. Equity is ensuring that each individual is given the tools they need to thrive. This Policy is about change and involves trying to redress the imbalances and respond in an appropriate and sensitive way"

POLICY STATEMENT

1. Hereford Yoga CIC ('the Company') recognises that discrimination, harassment and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Company to utilise the skills of the total workforce in order to maximise the accessibility, equality and welcoming nature of the CIC.
2. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give their best. The Company will ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the nine Protected Characteristics, see below). Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability
3. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment, including contractors and volunteers.
4. Nobody in contact with or representing the CIC (Eg, staff, contractors, volunteers, visiting teachers) will discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Company's services.
5. This policy applies to all employees, directors, contractors, volunteers, and students.
6. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies. Equality Act 2010 and any later amendments to such legislation or subsequent equality-related legislation that may be relevant.

OUR COMMITMENT

- To **create** an environment in which individual differences of everyone involved in the

- CIO are **recognised and valued**.
- To ensure that all teachers and students can expect **fair and accessible classes, workshops and events**. We aim to do this by **removing unfair conscious and unconscious bias** as far as possible and **improving equitable measures**.
 - To **promote equality in the workplace** which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
 - To ensure that **language** used by members of the CIC contains **no bias in content** towards any student or teacher sharing a particular characteristic, other than those that specifically apply to the purpose of the classes. In all instances where restrictions apply the reason will be clearly explained. *For example, women-only classes or age-specific classes and workshops.*
 - We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
 - Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
 - The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Everyone involved in The Company plays a part in making sure all aspects of our work are inclusive and welcoming of everyone.

Directors will ensure that they and their staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each director will ensure that:

- staff are aware of the policy and the arrangements, and the reasons for the policy;
- grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible;
- proper records are maintained.
- the operation of the policy is monitored in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic audits

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with everyone involved within the CIC (employees, directors, contractors, volunteers) and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices.

In particular, they should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

THIRD PARTIES

Third-party harassment occurs where a Company employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. Hereford Yoga CIC will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform one of the directors at once that this has occurred. Hereford Yoga CIC will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such

harassment does not happen again.

RELATED POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Company policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

THE EQUALITY ACT

The Equality Act 2010 applies to everyone. All service providers and those providing goods and facilities in the United Kingdom are covered by the Act.

The Act protects anyone who accesses our services from discrimination on the basis of a 'protected characteristic'. The Act also protects members of our yoga community from being discriminated against or harassed because of a protected characteristic they do not personally have (that is held by a member of their family, partner or associate.)

The nine protected characteristics are:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and Civil Partnership
5. Pregnancy and Maternity
6. Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality.
7. Ethnicity - includes aspects of both race and culture; as well as other characteristics such as traditions, language, religion, spirituality, upbringing, nationality and ancestral place of origin. It is also a personal expression of identity influenced by life experience and place of habitation; it is dynamic and changes over time.
8. Religion or belief
9. Sexual orientation

Other Characteristics: Although not legally protected, those characteristics that are unprotected should be treated equitably. Some examples of unprotected characteristics that could lead to unfair discrimination are:

- Accent
- Body expression and modification (tattoos, piercings, hairstyles, etc.)
- Culture
- Having a criminal record
- Political beliefs
- Socioeconomic status
- Subcultural identity
- Weight/body size/shape discrimination

TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION UNDER THE EQUALITIES ACT (2010):

Direct discrimination

Direct discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than another person in the same circumstances because of a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by association

Discrimination by association occurs when someone is treated less favourably because they are linked, or associated, with a person who has a protected characteristic.

Discrimination by perception

Discrimination by perception happens when someone is discriminated against because they are thought to have a particular protected characteristic or are treated as if they do. Teachers and students are protected from this sort of discrimination even if someone who discriminates knows that the other person does not have the particular protected characteristic

Indirect discrimination

The Act makes indirect discrimination by businesses unlawful. This will take place when a business applies a policy, criterion or practice in the same way to all individuals, but that policy, criterion or practice is discriminatory in its effect on, for example, one particular sex or racial or social group.

Harassment, Victimisation and Bullying

The Company encourages all students and teachers to contribute to the building of a positive environment where all are treated with dignity, respect and courtesy. All teachers and students of HYCIC have a responsibility to ensure that their behaviour towards each other reflects the principles of treating others with dignity and respect.

Bullying, harassment and intimidation are never acceptable and are not tolerated by the Company. Complaints about bullying and harassment will be treated in good faith and investigated fairly and appropriately.

Breaches of this policy regarding any form of unlawful discrimination, victimisation, harassment or bullying will be investigated.

RIGHTS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The Company attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- make reasonable adjustments to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

MONITORING

- A monitoring system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.
- Where appropriate **equality impact assessments** will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of the Company policies and our services may

have on those who experience them.

- The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.
- If monitoring shows that the Company, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the Company, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Company policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal Positive Action.

GRIEVANCES/DISCIPLINE

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation. Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences.

REVIEW

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Board of Directors.

Last Reviewed: November 2025